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HOW SHALL WE FIRE THEM WITH THE MISSIONARY  
PASSION AND MAKE THEM LEADERS OF  
MISSIONARY CHURCHES

## A Paper

PRESENTED AT THE

ECUMENICAL CONFERENCE ON FOREIGN MISSIONS

NEW YORK, APRIL 28, 1900

BY

REV. CHARLES CUTHBERT HALL, D.D.

*President of Union Theological Seminary*

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The Board of Foreign Missions  
REFORMED CHURCH BUILDING, 25 EAST 22D STREET, NEW YORK

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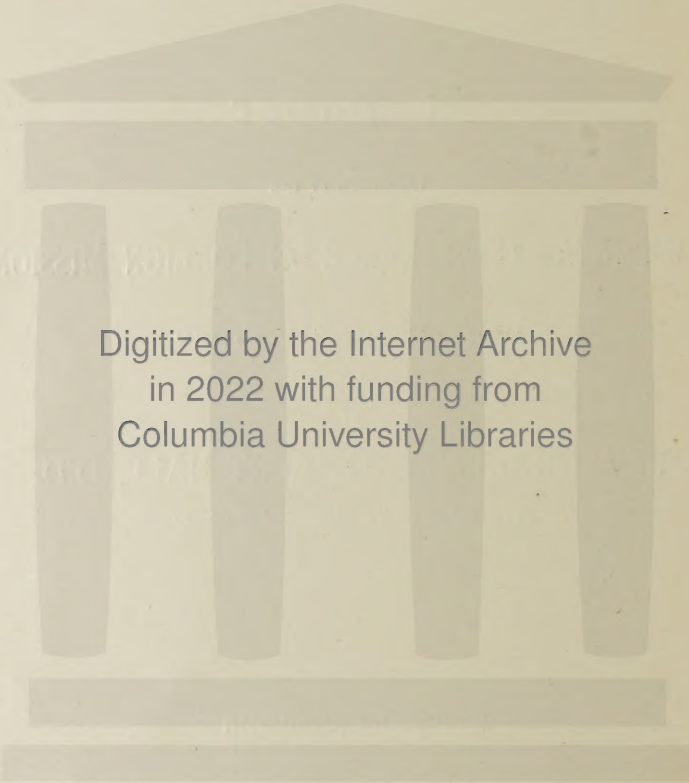
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## THE YOUNG MEN OF THE FUTURE MINISTRY.

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According to the New Testament standard, the passion of a Christlike love for human lives is a greater thing than eloquence, knowledge, or faith. "If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am become sounding brass or a clanging cymbal. And if I have the gift of prophecy and know all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have faith so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing." The passion of a Christlike love for human lives develops in the soul of a Christian disciple from the presence in himself of powers and activities that reflect the mind of Christ. These are : Clear vision of the world, deep feeling toward the world, actual effort for the world.

Our Lord saw all human life clearly. He saw the world as it is. No mists of optimism deceived Him—no veils of pessimism blinded Him. While taking note of every local interest, while loving and toiling for the individual, ever with clear eyes He saw the world, loved of God, cursed by sin, groaning and travailing for redemption.

And with this clear vision of all human life our Lord joined the deep feelings of perfect appreciation and divine compassion. What He saw He felt. Upon His own holy soul He bore the griefs and carried the sorrows of humanity. The sighing of the prisoner came up before Him, and the cry of the oppressed was in His ears. When He beheld the city He wept over it. He had compassion on the multitude because they were as sheep without a shepherd. With unwavering face He turned toward Jerusalem

that He might be lifted up and draw all men unto Himself.

And to this clear vision of the world and this deep feeling toward the world our Lord added actual effort for the world. His sorrow was not the impotent lament of one who fain would do, yet cannot. His burden was not the crushing burden of pessimism. It was the weight of the Sacrificial Cross. It was the Mediatorial burden. For the joy that was set before Him, He endured the cross, despising the shame. He came not to lament but to redeem. He came not to be ministered unto but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many.

And out of this holy triad of powers, His clear vision of the world, His deep feeling toward the world, His active effort for the world, issues the passion of His love for human lives — the love of Christ which passeth knowledge; the love which for us to know is for us to be filled with all the fullness of God. No conception within the range of human intelligence is so magnificent as this — the love of Christ for man; the boundless, fathomless, deathless love of the Son of God.

It is this conception that underlies the theme which engages our attention. We are attempting to answer this question: How shall we fire the young men of the future ministry with the missionary passion? How make them leaders of missionary churches?

The minister of Christ must have the spirit of Christ or he is none of His. "If any man have not the spirit of Christ he is none of His." He may speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but if he have not the passion of a Christlike love he has not the spirit of Christ. He may have all knowledge, he may have a faith that could move mountains, but if he have not the passion of a Christlike love, he has not the spirit of Christ.

To ask, therefore, how we shall fire with missionary passion the young men of the future ministry is to ask not how shall we add unto them something beyond and additional to their ministerial training, but how we shall make them true ministers of the Lord Jesus. For without the missionary passion they are not able ministers of the New Testament. They are disabled, deficient, half-equipped. They lack the fullness of the spirit of Christ.

The problem of the divinity school is this: Not how to train an occasional man for the foreign field, but how to kindle the missionary passion in *every* man that passes through the school that he may thereby become an able minister of Christ. For if, as Canon Edmonds said in his address on the translation of the Holy Scripture, "the missionary idea is conquering the life of the churches," then the missionary idea must conquer the life of every man who proposes to enter the ministry of the churches, whether abroad or at home. In the last analysis it is a secondary consideration whether any individual student in the divinity school has volunteered for service abroad. The primary and essential thing is that there shall be within the school a sacred altar of missionary passion, whereat the torch of every man shall be kindled and the lip of every man shall be touched with the living coal.

This conception of the life of the divinity school as a life transfused and saturated with the spirit of missions is founded upon two practical needs,—the need of the man who, possibly, may have the gifts for service abroad; the need of the man who may enter the pastorate at home.

As for the man who, possibly, may have gifts for service abroad: it is his need, it is his right, to have an atmosphere about him that shall promote the deep self-discovery which may lead him to volunteer; or that shall stablish, strengthen, and settle the purpose formed in college days



to do his life work upon the foreign field. The divinity school should be hot with the zeal for evangelization ; it should be radiant with the appreciation of missionary heroism ; it should be alert and eager for contact with the living workers ; it should be charged with solemn anxiety for the world's condition, so that no man can live within its walls without facing for himself the vital issue : " Is it Christ's will for me that I go forth to serve Him in the regions beyond ? "

As for the man who shall enter the pastorate at home : he cannot be an able minister of the Lord Jesus until his torch has been kindled at this altar, his lip touched with this living coal. Deny him this access in the days of his ministerial training, fail to provide him with the world-wide interest, neglect to teach him how to lift up his eyes and look upon the white harvest fields of the world, omit to conquer him with the missionary idea, and he goes forth to his life work lagging behind the eager spirit of his time, shackled with disadvantage, condemned in an age of catholicity to lead a life of provincialism.

If he has not found within his training school the atmosphere that feeds the missionary passion, if in his immaturity and inexperience he has been suffered to pass through and pass out into the active ministry ignorant of the mighty world of missions, he has been robbed of his birthright. For this knowledge, this atmosphere, this impulse belong to him in his own name and in the name of the Church he seeks to serve.

He requires it for himself that he may become a man of vision, a man of large and powerful conceptions, a man of capacity to inspire others ; he requires it for himself to protect him against a dry scholasticism, to advance him beyond intolerance and embittered partisanship, to lift him above feeble, petty, and trivial ambitions, disputes, and



jealousies ; he requires it for himself to make him great in sympathy, meek and lowly in heart, apostolic in his view of Christ and Christianity.

He requires this missionary passion not for himself alone, but in the name of the Church he seeks to serve. For four great functions belong to him who in the Christian pastorate of these latter days expresses the relation of the ministry at home to missions abroad.

It is his to overcome the resistance of uninstructed prejudice. In the mighty consensus of this Conference it requires effort to realize that in any Christian heart there can be resistance of Foreign Missions. Yet such resistance on the part of some has come within our observation ; a resistance negative rather than positive, born of misapprehension and the lack of knowledge. God grant that the vast influences radiating from this Christian gathering may help to dissolve the last vestiges of that strange, unreasoning antagonism !

It is his to awaken the attention of apathetic minds, which, content with the form rather than the life of Christianity, are blinded by local religious interests to the larger questions of the world's evangelization. This apathy can be broken. The same keen interest that springs to the realization of political events can be awakened toward the facts of the kingdom of Christ. But the man who thus conquers others must himself first be conquered and set on fire of God.

It is to educate the Church's intelligence. Knowledge is the true and substantial basis of an interest in missions. Vague perceptions of duty may help a flagging interest to survive, but the zeal that endures, the zeal that grows, the zeal that rises to the level of consecration is the zeal that is according to knowledge. The educational function of the missionary pastor cannot be over-stated. He must

mediate between a great but little known literature and a community of minds not likely to come under its influence except through his leadership.

It is to raise at home supplies for the church abroad ; to find the means that shall maintain the work of God. The far-off workers at the front depend upon him to coöperate with them by maintaining their supplies. He is a missionary as well as they, for the effects of his influence are telling on the maintenance of evangelization. By his acceptance of the pastorate he accepts an implied obligation to coöperate with those who are face to face with heathenism. To place a man in the pastorate in whom there is not the missionary passion is a twofold disaster : it breaks faith with those who have gone to the front, believing that the leaders of the church at home will keep pace with their advance ; it occupies the place of a better equipped man, who, having that passion, might stir a whole community to acts of sacrifice.

These considerations bring before us the relation of the divinity school to world-wide missions. The question now under discussion — How shall we fire the young men of the future ministry with the missionary passion ? — is already in process of solution, and it is not impossible to show the main lines along which that solution is destined to advance.

The study of missions is slowly rising to the rank of a theological discipline. That it has not done so sooner is not altogether so strange as at first appears. The literature of missions is comparatively a modern literature, and recognition of its importance has not been unduly delayed. The church is making her modern evangelistic history so rapidly and abundantly that it is but time to begin to feel the thrilling effects of that history reacting upon the divinity school. At many points that most salutary reaction

is taking place and the study of missions is finding its appropriate rank and proportion, while the opulent and splendid literature of missions is pouring into the library. It will soon be impossible in all the divinity schools that seek to keep pace with the times for a man to pass through his course of training without having the world-wide point of view, without seeing the world-wide vision, unless he rejects it for himself, and shuts his eyes against it. The contact of living missionary workers with the divinity school life shall become frequent and intimate. The realism of missions shall demonstrate itself to many who once had but a speculative interest therein. The philosophical aspects of missions shall appear in the light of the modern literature, and the whole subject of missions in its largest and noblest relations shall take its place in the curriculum beside the study of ancient languages, of Church history, of the doctrines of faith.

But the study of missions as a discipline of the divinity school cannot by itself bring to pass that setting on fire of the future ministry with the missionary passion.

I see other forces at work which make for that glorious end.

I see developing at many points a new conception of the ministry. It must attract toward it many of the most gifted and consecrated of our young men. The college and the seminary are drawing closer together. The study of missions in the colleges is bringing out a type of manhood which is full of heroic beauty, enthusiasm, and faith. The under-graduate is studying the world to-day as never before, is feeling in his fresh young heart the thrill of the new conceptions of applied Christianity, is realizing Christ's love and Christ's present salvation for the world in terms of reality. And in many a college to-day is found the very flower of our youth to whom the ministry appears,

not as a reserved and gloomy world of ecclesiastical technicalities, but as the King's own highway to joyful and abundant service.

I see a spirit developing among our young men that portends a vast accession of missionary enthusiasm for the ministry of the future. The Lord Jesus Christ is manifesting Himself in His Absolute Godhead, in His Availing Atonement, in His Enlightening Word, to a great company of our most educated and most gifted youths. Personal consecration for personal service is a conception of living that grows more and more attractive to a multitude of our finest minds; and out of this class of minds shall be gathered the ministry of the future.

It shall be a ministry devoted to the highest scholarship and to the most fearless search for truth: looking upon the culture of the mind as no foe to spirituality of life.

It shall be a Christ-filled ministry: beholding the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ; worshipping Him with the enthusiasm of an absolutely fearless affection, and presenting Him as the only Name given under heaven whereby men must be saved.

It shall be a Biblical ministry: holding fast the faithful Word and preaching that Word as the one great, sufficient message and revelation of God to man.

It shall be a missionary ministry: full of passion to redeem; clear-eyed to discover the ongoing of Christ's work; faithful in its stewardship at home and abroad; apostolic in its assurance that Christ has ordained it to bear much fruit; apostolic in its eagerness to spread far and wide the Gospel of the Risen and Ascended Lord; apostolic in its blessed hope that that Unseen and Crowned Saviour shall surely come again.









